

# Roanoke County Parks, Recreation and Tourism Comprehensive Master Plan for Parks and Park Facilities

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# Objective

- Prepare a Comprehensive Master Plan for Parks and Park Facilities
- Community based process that considers the full range of community needs, financial capacity, and facility standards
- Supports the strategic vision of the County
- The result will be a vision for the next 15 years for parks and park facilities supported by an update to the capital improvement plan
- The Master Plan will consider both indoor and outdoor Facilities along with recreation programming impacts.



# Community Input

- The foundation of Comprehensive Master Plan is extensive input throughout the County
  - Variety of recreation users
  - Key stakeholders
  - Community leaders
  - General public through public forums and citizen survey
- The community input represents qualitative and quantitative data used to define need, values, and vision for recreation in Roanoke County



# Community/Stakeholder Input

- Conducted 9 of 10 Key Leadership Interviews
  - Elected Officials, community leadership and local officials
  - Business Leaders
  - Key Partners/Philanthropic Organizations
- Conducted 10 Focus Groups
  - Wide-range of users, non-users, developers, and staff
- Conducted 5 Public Forums
  - Initial meeting and follow-up meeting
  - Organized by geographic or planning boundaries



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# Public Forum Summary





# Parkland Needs

- Regional size park in South County
- Additional Indoor recreation facilities are needed
- Areas for dog parks
- Additional multi-purpose fields
- Parks crowded and not enough non programmed space
- Too many amenities on small parcels
- Skateboard park is needed in the county
- Additional lacrosse fields are needed
- A Connected greenway system is needed
- Address future needs for park lands as development increases
- Position parks centrally around populated areas
- A Trail to Berkley Bottom (Vinyard) from Vinton is needed
- Purchase land around small parks for expansion
- A Sports facility like Moyer Complex is needed



# General Perception of Facilities and Programs

- Facilities are too spread out
- Parks overused for athletics
- Programs and facilities lack wide age groups appeal
- Accessibility issues at parks
- Parking Issues exist at many parks
- Deterioration of some existing Facilities
- Teen Centers are needed
- ASK program is positive, but not County-wide
- Great Senior Adult Programs but more locations are desired
- Vinyard Park is well maintained
- Pursue grants to fund the multi-generational recreation center
- Adequate number of athletic fields
- Scheduling problems exist at athletic fields
- Brambleton programs are not proximate to western-side of county
- Additional trails are needed



# General Perception of Facilities and Programs (cont.)

- Mt Pleasant Park needs additional amenities
- Would like the County to be leader of “green” environmental planning in parks
- Year round restroom facilities are needed
- Need to repair tennis courts, especially at Walrond Park



# What does the Community Value about the Park System?

- Play areas for small children
- Accessibility
- Restrooms
- Quality Maintenance
- Green space/Open space
- Safety
- Cultural events
- Ability to bring community together
- Attraction for diverse age groups, and segments
- Flexible in design of parks
- Diversity in type of experiences available
- A balance between age groups in facilities and programs
- A balance between passive and active activities in parks



# How is the County Supporting these listed Values?

- Great programs for Seniors
- Maintenance of natural areas should be addressed better
- Happy Hollow Gardens is great
- Entrances into County are excellent
- Need additional greenways and trails
- General maintenance in parks is not stressed enough
- Green Hill Park uses space well
- County is doing a great job
- Safety level varies in parks
- Better lighting is needed



# Public Perceptions of the Strengths of park and recreation System

- Sports programs are good but need more coordination
- Parks well-maintained
- Versatility of existing parks is a strength
- Community input meetings are appreciated
- Offers broad range of services, programs and facilities
- Diversity of programs
- Accessibility of staff
- Brambleton Center programs are excellent
- ASK is a good program
- Reaching out to the community is good
- Responsiveness to needs and complaints
- Brambleton is a good use of an older building



# Key Issues Affecting Operations

- Better Coordination of youth sports groups is desired
- Need to anticipate future growth
- Lacrosse fields are needed
- More Teen programs are needed, not just focused on sports/athletics
- Swim programs are lacking
- Better balance between real estate development and park planning
- Need a multi-generational center
- Development of Spring Hollow Reservoir for recreation
- Need better communication/feedback both from the County and residents on parks and recreation opportunities and issues



# Facility Needs Desired

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- Indoor recreation center
- Amphitheatre
- Handicap access
- Dog Parks
- Lacrosse fields
- Multi-generational center
- Skateboarding Facility
- Teen Centers
- More Lighting at parks and facilities
- Water Sports Facilities
- Additional athletic fields



# Value Received

- Need to know what we are getting
- May be willing to pay more if there was a solid plan in place to develop quality in parks and recreation facilities, etc.
- General agreement that it is a great value
- Would like to provide more benefit for future generations
- Only one facility in Bonsack



# User Fees for Programs & Services

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- Inexpensive related to value received
- Willing to pay more for additional services
- Citizens need an explanation of fees
- Classes priced fairly
- Cheaper than the community college
- Great value for the quality received



# Community's Vision for Economic Sustainability for the County

- Use Parks and Recreation as a Economic tool
- Must build the right types of facilities to attract people/business
- Should focus on special events that support economic development
- Business sponsorship of events is important
- Concentrate on developing tourism for the of area
- Need a signature attraction for families in the area
- Great facilities attract new residents and businesses



# Vision for Park and Recreation

- Should be known for the best parks and recreation facilities in the area
- Need tournament facilities for all sports
- Need a diversified park system that is balanced
- Need a regional park in south County
- Indoor sports facilities are needed
- Completed Greenway system
- Modern recreation centers
- Large sports complex
- Citizens are willing to pay for a quality parks system
- Access to a variety of trail types and good parking and trailheads



# Vision for Park and Recreation

(cont.)

- Revenue producing facilities
- Build out greenway system
- More emphasis on Spring Hollow Reservoir
- Community parks are great but more are needed
- Develop master plan that incorporates diversity
- A sports authority should be developed
- Each park should have its own special identity and specific programs
- Handicap accessibility at facilities
- Need park amenities that attract a large range of citizens
- Need a park land appropriation plan to acquire more park lands in underserved areas



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# Focus Group Summary



# Park and Recreation Facility and Programs Used

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- Recreation programs
- Senior Programs
- Soccer
- Special Needs/Therapeutic Programs
- Fitness
- Tennis
- Picnic Facilities
- Youth Sports
- Track and Field
- Golf
- Skate Park
- Football
- Mt. Pleasant Recreation Club



# Perception of Facilities

- Not enough programs for younger children
- Young and middle-age adults need programs
- Users do not appreciate what they have
- County acts like five jurisdictions not as one system
- Pretty good – better than City of Roanoke
- Need to repair facilities in a timely manner
- Priorities are out-of-line, too many sports fields versus a variety of types of facilities



# What are the Mandates of the Department

- Accessible parks
- Need additional community events
- Support programs for all ages
- Funding for Capital Improvements to maintain facilities and parks well
- Providing facilities for youth sports
- Must communicate programs and offerings to public
- Safe, clean parks and facilities
- Leverage partnerships to create more programs and facilities
- Look at the future from a revenue generation perspective



# Delivery of Mandates

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- Not able to meet the needs for all
- Heavily focused on youth
- Excellent on the delivery of youth sports
- More attention on trails and greenways
- Volunteers should be appreciated



# Strengths of System

- Nice facilities
- Doing well for what they have
- Strong youth programs
- Positive relationship with schools and Town of Vinton
- Variety of programs for all age groups
- Open to working with leagues and municipalities
- Reaching out to neighborhood organizations
- After-school programs are excellent
- Grant proposals and matching funds
- Sharing of properties and facilities in the County
- Placement of parks



# Operations, Maintenance, Capital Improvement Issues

- Need Direction on how recreation clubs should be properly managed
- Upgrade older facilities
- Capital dollars are not sufficient
- Handicap accessibility is a issue
- Lighting in parks is needed for safety reasons
- More focus on preventative maintenance
- Safety and code compliance on structures (i.e. bleachers)
- Bathrooms are in poor shape and are not very clean
- Hand sanitizers are needed



# Facility and Program Needs

- Facilities to generate revenue to help offset operational costs
- Should perform market and business plans prior to development
- Amphitheatre for entertainment
- More Picnic Facilities
- More Playgrounds
- Lack of indoor space
- Accessible pathways, trails and greenways
- Indoor community swimming pool
- Greenways and trail linkages
- Land dedication/acquisition
- Large indoor recreation center is needed
- Mobile concession stands
- Need to have the ability to support athletic tournaments
- Canoe and kayak lessons
- Non-sport programs for youth
- Young and middle-age adult programs
- Residents need to be more aware of programs
- Fitness classes are needed
- Better Marketing of programs is needed



# Facility and Program Needs (cont.)

- Do you believe that a new sports complex is warranted?
  - Must be accessible, generate revenue, and have an economic impact
  - Potential partnership with Botetourt County
  - Question whether the county could support it
- Several years ago the County conducted a survey for an outdoor water park that was positively viewed. Do you feel this is a facility that is still warranted?
  - It should not be outdoor, but an indoor facility
  - It would have to be designed for multiple age groups
  - Should be private venture, not through the county
  - Short-sighted and not a good use of funds – people will go to others for periodic use



# Level of Subsidy Provided by County

- Program should be priced at cost
- Users should pay for facilities and programs that are exclusive
- Need to educate users on the cost of programs
- Tiered pricing strategy is needed
- Have revenue zones/activities that cover costs of others
- A set financial commitment by the County is needed
- A Bond referendum is needed to balance the parks and recreation needs of the community
- Reinvestment of revenue back into parks and facilities is needed
- More Corporate sponsorships should be pursued



# Department's Role in Long-term Sustainability of the County

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- Quality of life, attracting and retaining residents
- Families need recreation
- Must market outdoor resources of the County
- There should exist a balance between active space and passive space



# Partnership Opportunities

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- Roanoke County Schools
- Regional Valley approach
- Churches for use of court space
- Regional approach with other city agencies
- Carillon Hospital for health and wellness
- Eventually – a City-County partnership
- Cooperation and coordination between school and County

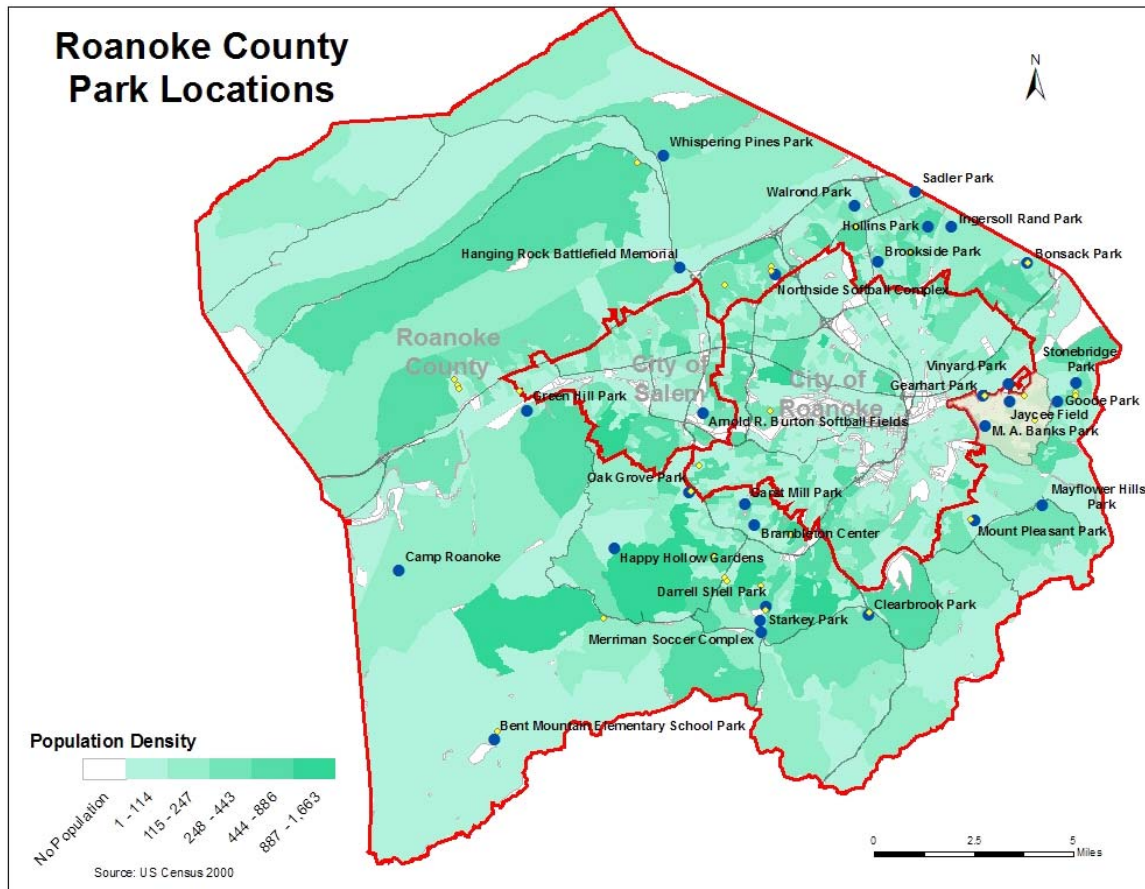


# What would you change?

- Improve parks that exist
- Reach the age groups that are being forgotten – young adults and young seniors
- Lights at Northside High School baseball field
- Develop a sports complex
- More aggressive partnerships with private groups and volunteer groups
- Better use of Roanoke River
- Coordinate and communicate better with local clubs
- Continuation and updating of master plan implementation
- Family oriented parks
- Demand more from developers
- Elected officials need to understand the importance of parks and recreation to the quality of life of the county
- Balance in programs for all age segments
- Ensure long term funding requirements
- Fix and upgrade existing facilities



# Park Locations





# Preliminary Standards

Facility Type	Roanoke County Inventory	Roanoke County Current Service Level Based on County Inventory	National Guideline Service Level	Preliminary Recommended County Standard	Surplus/ Deficit
<b>Neighborhood Parks (in Acres)</b>	112.00	1.3 acres/1,000	2 acre/1,000	1.0 acre/1,000	Meets Standard but needs redistribution
<b>Community Parks (in Acres)</b>	312.00	3.6 acres/1,000	3 acres/1,000	3.0 acres/1,000	Meets Standard but needs redistribution
<b>Linear/Greenway Parks (in Acres)</b>	0.00	0.0 acres/1,000	N/A	2.0 acres/1,000	Need 172 acres
<b>Regional Parks (in Acres)</b>	604.00	7.0 acres/1,000	10 acres/1,000	9.0 acres/1,000	Need 168 acres
<b>Total Park Acres</b>	1,028.00	12.0 acres/1,000	15 acres/1,000	15.0 acres/1,000	Need 259 acres



# Preliminary Standards

Facility Type	Roanoke County Inventory	Roanoke County Current Service Level Based on County Inventory	National Guideline Service Level	Recommended County Standard	Surplus/ Deficit
Tennis Courts (Each)	22	1 court/3,900	1 court/5,000	1 court/ 3,900	Meets Standard
Outdoor Basketball (Each)	11.0	1 court/7,800	1 court/2,500	1 court/ 5,000	Need 1 court
Playgrounds (Each)	16	1 site/5,400	1 site/1,250	1 site/ 3,000	Need 12 sites
Trails Soft Surface (in Miles)	8.50	0.1 miles/1,000	.4 mile/1,000	0.2 mile/1,000	Need 9 miles
Trails Hard Surface (in Miles)	5.60	0.06 miles/1,000	.4 miles/1,000	0.2 miles/1,000	Need 11 miles
Softball Youth Fields (Each)	7	1 field/12,300	1 field/5,000	1 field/ 10,000	Need 2 fields
Softball Adult Fields (Each)	3	1 field/28,600	1 field/20,000	1 field/ 20,000	Need 2 fields
Baseball Fields (Each)	27	1 field/3,200	1 field/10,000	1 field/ 3,000	Need 2 fields
Soccer Fields (Each)	16	1 field/5,400	1 field/5,000	1 field/ 5,000	Need 2 fields
Skate Parks (Each)	1	1 site/85,778	1 site/50,000	1 site/ 50,000	Need 1 park
Recreation Center (Indoor Fitness/ Aquatics) (in Sq Ft)	20,000	0.2 sf/person	1 sf/person	2.0 sf/person	Need 151,000 sf



# PROS Facility Assessment

- The image value and location/fit of the majority of parks are good
- Overall maintenance and cleanliness is performed at a good level of quality, but consistency is needed across the county
- Quality and maintenance of sports fields are at a good level of service
- The current program suitability/utilization in the majority of parks is effective
- In general, very few landscape improvements or maintenance is needed



# PROS Facility Assessment

- Parking configuration, modifications and minor parking improvements/upkeep are consistently needed
- Signs are substandard in a majority of the facilities
- Restroom facilities are needing upgrades
- Improve playground equipment because it looks aged and out of date
- Trail connectivity is needed system-wide
- There is not a good balance between active space and passive space in many parks



# PROS Facility Assessment

- ADA access is limited
- Additional shelters are needed for picnicking and providing reservation opportunities
- The potential for partnerships and revenue is limited but still has potential at key sites
- Key facilities could benefit with the development of a business plan
- There is a lack of indoor space for recreation programs, fitness, and aquatics



# PROS Facility Assessment

- Many of the parks need updated master plans and more signature parks are needed
- Age segment amenities need to be added to create a wider variety of users
- Parks need a theme and an enhanced image
- Parks and Park types are not distributed equitably across the county and by District
- The Camp Roanoke is a great asset and needs to be promoted on a regional/national level
- A capital improvement criteria and funding plan is needed to improve existing parks



# Recreation Assessment

- Core programs lack appropriate indoor space to support residents needs
- Programs are very affordable and have the capability of generating more revenue
- There is a lack of program standards for staff to follow that is consistent across the county
- Pricing of services need a better approach and philosophy based on true costs to provide
- School partnerships need to be improved
- Revenue producing facilities need to be created beyond sports facilities



# Recreation Program Assessment

- Core programs are lacking in aquatics, fitness, environmental education, family programs, preschool, and performing arts
- Performance measures are needed to hold staff accountable
- Various groups are highly entitled which makes it difficult for the staff to manage
- Improved marketing efforts to let residents know what is available is needed
- Staff do a great job in hosting tournaments for youth sports in the county



# Key Issues

- There is a need for more signature regional parks that have wide age segment appeal that is both active and passive
- Parks are not equitably distributed across the county
- There is a lack of indoor program space available to support existing and future core recreation programs
- There is a need for more capital dollars to be invested in existing parks
- There is too much entitlement built into the system that needs to be managed better
- Pricing of services needs an improved philosophy and approach
- The park and recreation system is not balanced as it applies to park land types, recreation facility types, and programs offered
- Yearly operational budgets need to be developed around standards and time



# Key Issues

- A strong vision is needed to guide key decision makers for recreation and parks for the next ten years based on a regional approach to the needs of the Roanoke Valley
- Performance measures need to be developed in all areas of the system to measure impact and success
- Partnerships need to be made more equitable
- New revenue sources to help offset operational and capital costs need to be pursued
- Tying economic development and recreation amenities together is a must and needs to be expanded beyond sports



# Comprehensive Master Plan for Parks and Park Facilities

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- Next Steps
- Citizen Survey
- Benchmark Report
- Facility Development Plan
- Visioning Workshop
- Feasibility Study to start